

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 SY-05 A-01
OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 AID-05 MCT-01 EB-07 MC-02
TRSE-00 ACDA-07 /102 W
-----011546Z 023572 /44

O R 011400Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7699
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
DIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, EFIN, TU
SUBJ: TURKISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN ROUNDUP, MAY 26-JUNE 1

REF: ANKARA 4053 (DTG 251340Z MAY 77) AND PREVIOUS

1. THE FINAL WEEK OF THE TURKISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN IS BRINGING
MORE OF THE SAME--MORE VIOLENCE, MORE RALLIES AND MORE
RHETORIC. THE MAJOR POLITICAL LEADERS CONTINUE TO AVOID SERIOUS
DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES AS THEY ATTACK EACH OTHER AND
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CRISS-CROSS THE COUNTRY ASKING THE VOTERS TO TRUST THEM
TO GOVERN BETTER THAN THE OTHER PARTIES COULD OR HAD.

2. THE VIOLENCE THAT HAS MARRED TURKEY'S POLITICAL LIFE FOR
TWO AND A HALF YEARS CONTINUED THIS WEEK TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN THE
CAMPAIGN. MOST INCIDENTS RESULTED FROM ATTEMPTS TO DISRUPT
RALLIES OR PREVENT DISTRIBUTION OF CAMPAIGN LITERATURE. THE

MOST VIOLENT INCIDENT INVOLVING A MAJOR POLITICAL FIGURE OCCURRED IN THE MEDITERRANEAN CITY OF ISKENDERUN MAY 30 WHEN PRIMIN DEMIREL'S ENTRY INTO THE CITY WAS DELAYED BY A HOSTILE MOB THAT STONED A CAR CARRYING JUSTICE PARTY (JP) MINISTER OF ENERGY KILIC. TWO DAYS EARLIER A TIME BOMB EXPLODED IN ISKENDERUN AT A SPOT WHERE NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP) CHAIRMAN TURKES HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO SPEAK. NO ONE WAS INJURED. IN THE SOUTHEASTERN PROVINCE OF MARDIN MAY 27 A TRIBAL FEUD AGGRAVATED BY POLITICAL RIVALRIES RESULTED IN FOUR DEATHS INCLUDING A JP CANDIDATE FOR PARLIMANET. THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CANDIDATE WHOSE TRIBE WAS ACCUSED OF THE KILLINGS CLAIMED SELF DEFENSE.

3. OTHER VIOLENT INCIDENTS NOT NECESSARILY ASSOCIATED WITH THE CAMPAIGN HEIGHTENED TENSION IN THIS SENSITIVE PERIOD. MAY 29 MAJOR EXPLOSIONS DAMAGED THE ISTANBUL AIRPORT AND TRAIN STATION AND KILLED FIVE PEOPLE (SEPTELS NOTAL). THE APPARENTLY ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE OF A TEAR GAS GRENADE BY POLICEMEN ASSISTING AT THE ARRIVAL OF RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT IN IZMIR RESULTED IN INJURY TO THE LEG OF ONE OF ECEVIT'S ADVISERS. ECEVIT SUBSEQUENTLY CHARGED THAT HE HAD BEEN THE VICTIM OF A DELIBERATE ASSISINATION ATTEMPT. WHEN THE IZMIR GOVERNOR LATER ANNOUNCED THAT INJURY HAD RESULTED FROM ACCIDENTAL FIRING OF A POLICE WEAPON, ECEVIT CHARGED THE POLICE WITH A COVER-UP.

4. ECEVIT, DEMIREL AND NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) CHAIRMAN ERBAKAN, ALONG WITH MINOR PARTY LEADERS, CONTINUED TO CRISS-CROSS THE COUNTRY IN AN ATTEMPT TO SPEAK TO AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE BEFORE THE JUNE 5 ELECTION DATE. AS THEY HAVE THOUGHTOUT THE CAMPAIGN, BOTH ECEVIT AND DEMIREL DREW GOOD CROWDS. MOST OBSERVERS ESTIMATE ECEVIT GENERALLY OUT-DREW DEMIREL, ALTHOUGH IN TRADITIONALLY CONSERVATIVE SOUTHWESTERN TURKEY, THIS WAS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE. ECEVIT'S CROWDS WERE ALSO GENERALLY MUCH MORE ANIMATED THAN THOSE OF DEMIREL. ECEVIT AND DEMIREL BOTH CALLED FOR MAJORITY VICTORIES IN ORDER TO SAVE TURKISH DEMOCRACY. DEMIREL CONTINUED TO FOCUS HIS ATTACK ON ECEVIT AND THE MENACE OF THE LEFT. HE CONTINUED TO PROTRAY ERBAKAN AS A SECONDARY MENACE. ECEVIT, IN TURN, FORCUSSED ON "FASCIST" DEMIREL AND HIS "GOVENMENT OF BANDITS". ERBAKAN SUFFERED THROUGH SEVERAL RELATIVELY DISAPPOINTING APPEARANCES; HOWEVER, ON MAY 29 HE DREW A GOOD CROWD IN ISTANBUL WHER HE SPOKE IN CLEBRATION OF THE 524TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CAPTURE OF THE CITY BY MEHMET THE CONQUEROR. HE BACKED AWAY FROM A THREATENED "PRAY-IN" AT AYA SOPHIA WHEN ISTANBUL'S GOVERNOR ANNOUNCED THAT AYA SOPHIA, A MUSEUM SINCE ATATURK'S TIME, WOULD NOT BE OPEN THAT DAY.

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5. FOREIGN POLICY STILL HAS NOT BECOME A MAJOR CAMPAIGN
ISSUE; HOWEVER, IT DID SURFACE DURING THE PAST WEEK IN
RADIO SPEECHES AND NEWSPAPER INTERVIEWS. JP SENATOR KAMRAN
INAN, SPEAKING FOR THE PARTY IN A RADIO BROADCAST MAY 25,
ACCUSED THE RPP OF HAVING MADE SERIOUS FOREIGN POLICY ERRORS
WHILE IT WAS IN POWER AND OF HAVING BEEN UNSUPPORTIVE OF
NATIONAL INTERESTS DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS. INAN SAID THAT
THE RPP SEEMED TO CONFUSE GOVERNMENT INTERESTS AND STATE
INTERESTS, REFUSING TO SUPPORT THE LATTER IN FEAR THAT
IT MIGHT SOMEHOW HELP THE GOVERNMENT. HE SPECIFICALLY ACCUSED
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THE RPP OF NOT JOINING IN THE EFFORT TO GET THE US ARMS EMBARGO LIFTED AND OF BELITTILING THE GOT'S EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH TURKEY'S RIGHTS IN THE AEGEAN.

6. ECEVIT'S SENIOR FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR, HASAN ESAT ISIK, RESPONDED IN A SIMILAR RADIO SPEECH ON MAY 31 IN WHICH HE ACCUSED DEMIREL OF HAVING BEEN INEFFECTIVE IN DEFENDING TURKEY'S RIGHTS. HE SAID THE COALITION GOVERNMENT (AND PREVIOUS DEMIREL GOVERNMENTS) HAD BEEN OVERLY CAUTIOUS IN DEALING WITH THE UNITED STATES AND NATO AND HAD ADJUSTED TURKISH POLICY TO COINCIDE WITH THE INTERESTS OF OTHER RATHER THAN TURKEY'S NATIONAL INTERESTS. ISIK CONTRASTED THE "PRINCIPLED" AEGEAN POLICY OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT WITH THE "CORRUPT" POLICY OF THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT. ISIK SAID THAT WHEN ECEVIT SENT THE SURVEY SHIP CANDARLI INTO THE AEGEAN IN 1974 HE ANNOUNCED THAT THE CONTINENTAL SHELF UNDER THE WATER IN WHICH THE CANDARLI PROSPECTED WOULD BELONG TO TURKEY. DEMIREL, ACCORDING TO ISIK, DID NOT CLAIM THE CONTINENTAL SHELF BENEATH THE OPERATING AREAS OF THE HORA. "HE EVEN COMPARED THE HORA TO THE FISHING BOAT, NO DOUBT TO HUMOR THE GREEKS."

7. IN ANOTHER RADIO BROADCAST, FORMER MINISTER OF INTERIOR OGUZHAN ASILTURK DESCRIBED THE NSP'S " FOREIGN POLICY WITH A PERSONALITY". HE ACCUSED THE RPP AND THE JP OF HAVING PURSUED A FOREIGN POLICY OF SUBSERVIENCE TO THE WEST THE PAST 25 YEARS. HE CLAIMED CREDIT FOR ALL FOREIGN POLICY ADVANCES THAT HAD OCCURRED DURING THE ECEVIT AND DEMIREL COALITION GOVERNMENTS. HE PROMISED THAT IF THE NSP RETURNS TO POWER, IT WILL CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH OTHER ISLAMIC COUNTRIES, WILL PROCLAIM THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE TURKISH-CYPRIOI STATE, WILL DISMANTLE GREEK FORTIFICATIONS ON THE AEGEAN ISLANDS, WILL SAFEGUARD ALL TURKISH RIGHTS IN THE AEGEAN, AND WILL STOP THE INHUMANE TREATMENT OF TURKIS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

8. IN OTHER COMMENTS ON FOREIGN POLICY, PRIMIN DEMIREL IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AN INTERVIEW WITH MILLIYET EDITOR ABDI IPEKCI MAY 27 SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN "REDEFINING TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY" INCLUDING TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE, LIKE INAN, CRITICIZED FAILURE OF THE RPP TO SUPPORT NATIONAL INTERESTS. HE TOLD IPEKCI THAT IT APPEARS THAT THE RPP WOULD BE EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTED IF THE U.S. ARMS EMBARGO SHOULD BE LIFTED- "AS IF TURKEY WULD NOT BENEFIT FROM IT, BUT THE JP WOULD". DEMIREL ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD MADE IT VERY CLEAR DURING HIS RECNET TRIP TO LONDON THAT UNLESS THE US-TURKISH DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT (DCA) WERE RATIFIED BY THE U.S.

CONGRESS, TURKEY WILL BE FORCED TO REVISE ITS RELATIONS WITH NATO.

9. IN A PARALLEL INTERVIEW THE SAME DAY, RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT TOLD IPEKCI THAT THE SOLUTION OF OUTSTANDING FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS HAD BEEN MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY THE PERFORMANCE OF THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT. HE REITERATED THE RPP THEME THAT TURKEY MUST DEVELOP A "NEW NATIONAL DEFENSE CONCEPT," EVEN THOUGH IT MAINTAINS ITS MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. IN THIS WAY, ECEVIT EXPLAINED, TURKEY WILL NO LONGER BE DEPENDENT ON DECISIONS MADE BY ANOTHER COUNTRY. ECEVIT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT AS PRMIN HE WOULD BE ABLE TO RESOLVE TURKISH-GREEK DIFFICULTIES, BUT WHEN PRESSED FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION ECEVIT SAID HE DID NOT THINK IT WAS APPROPRIATE TO COMMENT IN DETAIL AT THIS TIME.

10. DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS, TWO OF TURKEY'S LARGEST NEWSPAPERS, HURRIYET AND GUNAYDIN, HAVE PUBLISHED POLLS PROJECTING A SUBSTANTIAL RPP PLURALITY IN THE JUNE 5 ELECTION AS REPORTED IN ANKARA 4154, HURRIYET CLAIMS THAT ITS POLL IS BASED ON AN EFFORT BY TRAINED PROFESSIONALS. THE RESULTS OF THESE POLLS ARE GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH THE VIEWS OF MOST TURKISH POLITICAL OBSERVERS. PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS AND POLITICAL PREDICTIONS ARE EXCEPTIONALLY UNCERTAIN IN TURKEY, HOWEVER. ONE COMPLICATING FACTOR IS THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MOST NEWSPAPERS AND POLITICAL PUNDITS SHARE A BIAS FOR THE RPP WHICH MAY WELL INFLUENCE THEIR COMMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, EMBASSY OFFICERS WHO WERE IN TURKEY FOR THE 1973 ELECTION RECALL THAT MOST OBSERVERS AT THAT TIME FAILED TO DETECT THAT STRONG SURGE BY ECEVIT THAT GAVE HIM A PLURALITY IN THE ELECTION. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE THAT PROJECTIONS OF ELECTIONS RESULTS MUST BE REGARDED WITH GREAT SKEPTICISM. AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE THE CLEAR IMPRESSION MOST TURKISH VOTERS--REGARDLESS OF PARTY AFFILIATION--HOPE THAT A SINGLE PARTY GOVERNMENT WILL EMERGE FROM THE BALLOT BOXES ON JUNE 5. THE PUBLICATION AT THIS TIME BY WIDE-CIRCULATION NEWSPAPERS OF POLLS PREDICTING A NEAR-MAJORITY FOR THE RPP MIGHT WELL HAVE A BANDWAGON EFFECT ON UNCOMMITTED VOTERS.

11. CONSULATES GENERAL ISTANBUL AND IZMIR AND CONSULAT ADANA HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT.
MACOMBER

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